



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/682,177	07/31/2001	Carlos A. Aguilar	0112701-191	9016

29157 7590 07/30/2003

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC
P. O. BOX 1135
CHICAGO, IL 60690-1135

EXAMINER

MADSEN, ROBERT A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1761

DATE MAILED: 07/30/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/682,177

Applicant(s)

AGUILAR ET AL.

Examiner

Robert Madsen

Art Unit

1761

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ 6) ☐ Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-14, 25-30, drawn to a pet food container comprising a compartmented tray with wet and dry foods and a foldable surface to combine compartments, classified in class 426, subclass 112.
 - II. Claims 15-19, drawn to a compartmented pet food tray containing a pet food product with a surface for receiving another pet food product, classified in class 426, subclass 120.
 - III. Claims 20-22, drawn to a pet food with an indentation for receiving another pet food, classified in class 426, subclass 805.
 - IV. Claims 23-24 drawn to a method of providing a pet food product from a container by using the dry food unit in the container to deliver the wet food product in the container to a pet classified in class 426, subclass 394.
 - V. Claims 31-34, drawn to a pouch of pet food with a divider between wet and dry foods, classified in class 426, subclass 120..
2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because:
3. Inventions I and II are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different modes of operation. Invention I

comprises a fold in the tray to combine dry and wet foods, while the tray of Invention II has dry food for receiving the wet food with no fold in the tray.

4. Inventions I and III related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because invention I does not require that the dry food is indented or that it can *receive* the wet food (i.e. the dry food could be small pellets). The subcombination has separate utility such as dry pet treat packaged in bag. That is, the dry food is not packaged with a wet food, and it is not intended to be combined with a wet food for consumption.

5. Inventions I, II, and V and Invention IV are related as products and process of their use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the products as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case, the products (or containers of Invention I, II, and V) can be used in a materially different process. The dry and wet foods can be removed separately from the container separately using a spoon and feed separately to a pet, as opposed to using the dry food unit to remove the wet food unit.

6. Inventions I is unrelated to Invention V. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different modes of operation. Invention I is a compartment tray with a foldable surface for combining the two compartment contents and Invention V is a compartmented pouch.

7. Inventions II and III are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the dry food of Invention II requires an end surface adapted to hold a quantity of a wet food. Such a surface would include a flat end surface. The subcombination has separate utility such as a dry pet treat packaged in a bag. That is, it does not have to be packaged with a wet food in a tray, it does not have to be combined with a wet food for consumption.

8. Inventions II is unrelated to Invention V. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different modes of operation and different functions. Invention II is a compartmented tray with dry and wet pet, and Invention V is a compartmented pouch.

9. Invention III and Invention IV are related as product and process of their use.

The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case, the product can be used in a materially different process. The dry food does not have to have to be used to remove wet food from a compartment container, but may packaged alone and fed to the pet without wet food.

10. Inventions V and III are related as combination and subcombination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed because the pouch does not require the dry food has an end surface with an indentation that is adapted for receiving a quantity of a wet food. Instead the dry food could by a smooth sphere. The subcombination has separate utility such as a dry pet treats packaged in a canister. That is, the dry food could be packaged without wet food, without a pouch, and not intended to be combined with a wet food.

11. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).


- Application/Control Number: 09/682,177
Art Unit: 1761


Page 6

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Robert Madsen whose telephone number is (703)305-0068. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00AM-3:30PM M-F.

13. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on (703)308-3959. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703)872-9310 for regular communications and (703)872-9311 for After Final communications.

14. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0061.

Robert Madsen 
Examiner
Art Unit 1761
July 28, 2003


MILTON I. CANO
SUPERVISORY EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700